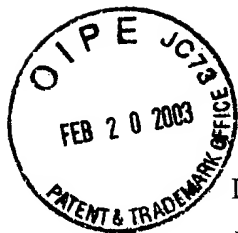


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

James N. GIDDINGS et al.

Application No.: 09/636,286

Filed: August 10, 2000

Group Art Unit: 1731

Examiner: John M. Hoffman

For: QUARTZ FUSION FURNACE AND METHOD FOR FORMING QUARTZ
ARTICLES

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box Fee Amendment
Washington, D. C. 20231

Sir:

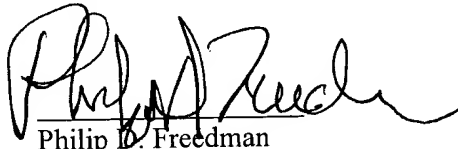
In response to the Restriction Requirement mailed February 3, 2003, Applicants
hereby elect Group I, claims 1 to 9 with traverse.

The Group II claims 10 to 16 are directed to a furnace in which the Group I process can be conducted. The Group III claim is directed to a glass object that can be produced by the method of the Group I process and in the Group II furnace. The Group IV claim is directed to a fiber that can be produced by the method of the Group I process and in the Group II furnace. The subject matter of all the claims is sufficiently related that a search of any one Group encompasses a search for the subject matter of the other Group. Section 803 of the MPEP states that "[i]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." All of the claims of the present application could be examined without serious burden in view of their close relationship. In order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to the Applicants and duplicate examination by the Patent Office, it is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement be reconsidered and withdrawn.

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It is respectfully requested that the Restriction Requirement be reconsidered and withdrawn and this Application be examined on its merits.

Respectfully submitted,



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Alexandria, Virginia
Feb. 14, 2003